

Message Text

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4480

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: ROKG BATTLES NORTH KOREAN "PEACE OFFENSIVE"

REF: SEOUL 4296

1. ROKG IS WORKING HARD TO KEEP AT FEVER PITCH
CONCERN OVER THE THREAT FROM THE NORTH IN THE FACE OF
REPORTS FROM ABROAD THAT KIM IL-SONG RECEIVED NO
SUPPORT IN PEKING FOR AGGRESSION AGAINST THE ROK
AND THAT PYONGYANG IS NOW CONCENTRATING ON A DIPLOMATIC
RATHER THAN A MILITARY OFFENSIVE.

2. FOLLOWING HIS CRITICISM OF GENERALLY DOVISH
INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATION OF KIM'S TRIP TO PEKING
(REFTEL) PRIMIN KIM CHONG-PIL ANNOUNCED THAT
NORTH KOREA'S CURRENT DIPLOMATIC MOVES WERE AIMED
AT JUSTIFYING ITS PLANS TO INVADE THE SOUTH.
SPEAKING DURING A LOCAL INSPECTION TOUR ON
JUNE 18, KIM SAID THAT WAR COULD BREAK OUT AT
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ANY TIME AND COULD BE HASTENED BY SIGNS OF DISUNITY
AND DISRUPTION IN THE SOUTH. IN A MESSAGE READ THE
NEXT DAY AT THE OPENING OF A NATIONAL TARGET
SHOOTING TOURNAMENT, KIJ ASSERTED THAT THE NORTH'S
PEACE PROPAGANDA CLOAKED A "SCHEME TO COMMUNIZE

ALL KOREA BY ARMED FORCE", AND WAS ALSO AIMED AT CAUSING DISUNITY IN THE SOUTH.

3. KIM'S STATEMENTS WERE BUTTRESSED BY A REPORT FROM THE ROKG CONTROLLED INTERNAL/EXTERNAL NEWS SERVICE (CARRIED IN THE JUNE 20 PRESS) THAT THROUGH A NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, CHINA HAS INDICATED IN PRINCIPLE ITS SUPPORT FOR PYONGYANG'S PLANS TO INVADE THE SOUTH. ACCORDING TO THE NEWS SERVICE, THE PROGRAM INVOLVES DELIVERY OF FIGHTER PLANES, TANKS, SUBMARINES, DESTROYERS, TORPEDOES AND PLANTS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF AIRCRAFT PARTS.

4. COMMENT: SEOUL'S ALARMS OVER THE THREAT FROM THE NORTH HAVE ALREADY LED TO CONCERN ON THE PART OF SOME ROKG OFFICIALS OVER THEIR POTENTIALLY DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT. MORE RECENTLY, THE UNABATING PRESS CAMPAIGN, TOGETHER WITH CIVIL DEFENSE PLANS AND EXERCISES, HAVE BEGUN TO DRAW PRIVATE COMPLAINTS FROM SOME GOVERNMENT SOURCES ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. A FOREIGN MINISTRY BUREAU DIRECTOR, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS TOLD US THAT GIVEN GREATER WESTERN PRESS ATTENTION AND ACCESS TO THE ROK, REPORTS OF THESE ACTIVITIES ARE MAKING THE ROK LOOK LIKE THE BELLIGERENT PARTY AND THE NORTH KOREANS, BY COMPARISON, PEACEFUL. THE DIRECTOR THOUGHT THIS MIGHT HURT THE ROKG AT THEN UNGA AND IN THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE. A DRP ASSEMBLYMAN TOOK A SIMILAR LINE, SPECULATING THAT THE INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT SEOUL, NOT PYONGYANG, WAS THE SABER RATTLER.
SNEIDER

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